



GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

INVESTING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Governor Whitmer is focused on delivering for rural families, communities, and small businesses. She will work with anyone to lower the cost of child care, build more housing, empower rural economic development, and make high-speed internet more accessible.

Fostering economic growth in rural communities

- [Created](#) the [Office of Rural Development](#) to support rural economic growth.
- Signed bills to [boost the food and agriculture industry](#) by ensuring Michigan food and agriculture businesses can export their products to other nations.
- Made infrastructure [investments to support the agriculture economy](#) generating \$187 million in investment and supporting 145 jobs.
- Signed [budgets](#) investing more than [\\$50 million](#) in food and agriculture economic development projects and grants to spur economic growth in rural communities.
- Invested over \$53 million in Michigan State University's [dairy center and greenhouses](#).
- [Opened](#) the hemp market to Michigan's producers, bringing a new commodity to Michigan's diverse agricultural market.
- [Proposed](#) \$37.5 million to support Michigan's food and agriculture supply chains.

Investing in infrastructure

- Fixed 16,000 lane miles of road and 1,200 bridges, supporting 89,000 jobs in first term.
- Invested over \$4 billion to upgrade water infrastructure, supporting 57,000 jobs.
- Made historic investments in affordable housing to build 2,000 affordable, attainable rental housing units, and leverage \$380 million in private funding.
- Leveraged over \$900 million to connect communities to reliable [high-speed internet](#).
- Increased funding to support [local conservation districts](#) and [farmers](#) implement conservation practices.
- Created the [Food and Agricultural Housing Task Force](#) to address the impact impediment housing has had on rural economic development.

Expanding access to childcare, education, and skills

- Put Michigan students first with [\\$9,150 per student](#) funding, the highest ever state funding. Raised per-pupil funding by \$1,279 over first term, a 16.2% increase.
- [Closed the funding gap](#), ensuring every school district has the same baseline funding and consistently dedicated more state resources to students with the highest needs.
- Expanded access to free preschool for [22,000+ more four-year olds](#) through Great Start Readiness Program and affordable child care for [150,000 more children](#). Now, a family of four earning up to \$55,500 is eligible for free or low-cost child care.
- Funded programs like [Reconnect](#), [Futures for Frontliners](#), and [Michigan Opportunity Scholarship](#) to provide hundreds of thousands of Michiganders tuition-free higher education or skills training that leads to a high-skill, good-paying job.

Expanding access to health services

- Extended [Healthy Michigan](#) to [over 1 million people](#).
- Expanded access to [telemedicine](#) and required all insurers to [cover telehealth](#).
- Established the [Michigan Opioids Task Force](#), secured [\\$80 million in federal funding](#) to combat the opioid crisis, and supported Attorney General Nessel's work to sue major opioid distributors and win a [historic \\$800 million settlement](#).
- Secured [funding to respond to mental stress](#) and fatigue of Michigan farmers and agricultural workers and their families.
- Created the [Food Security Council](#) to identify opportunities to reduce food insecurity.

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